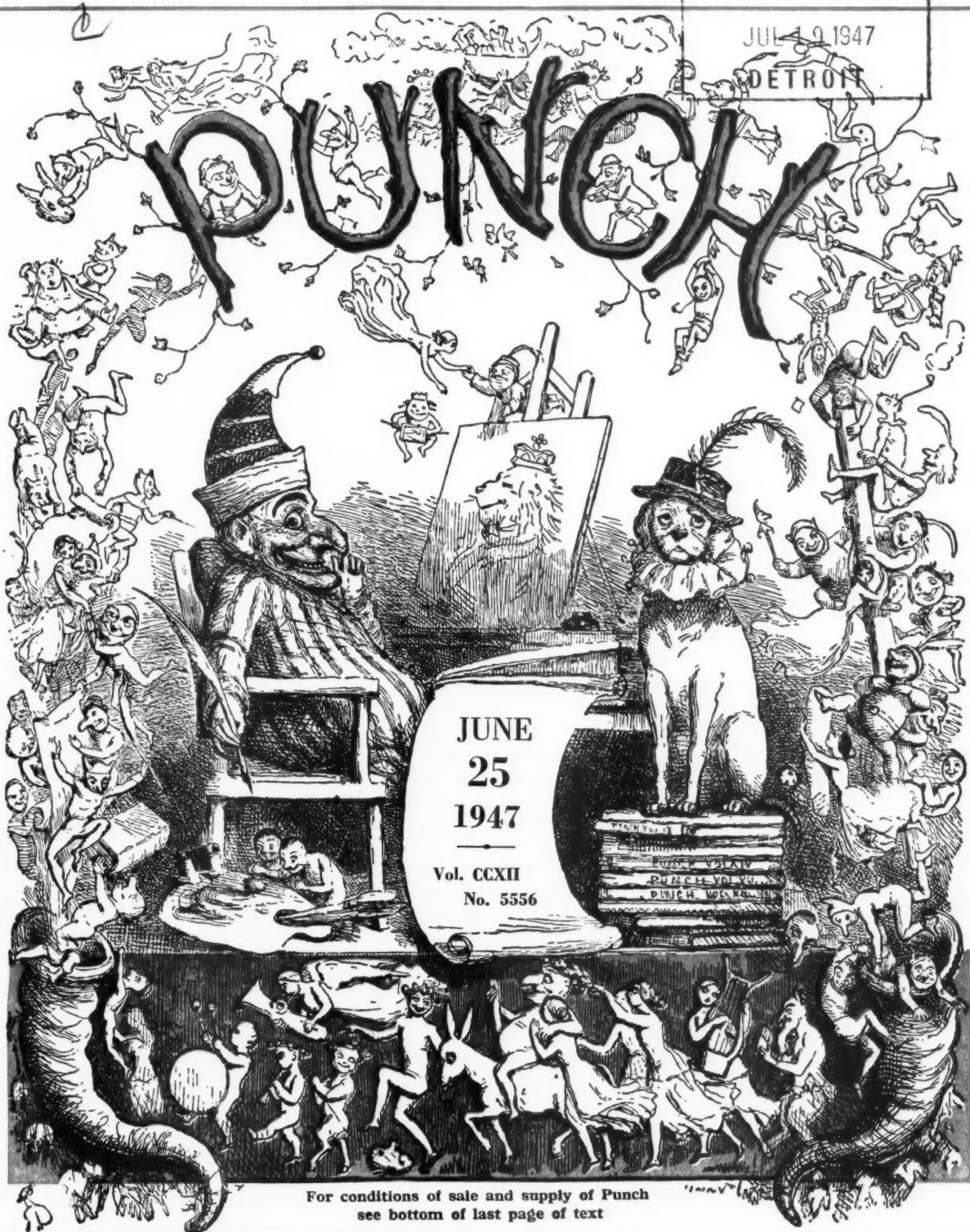


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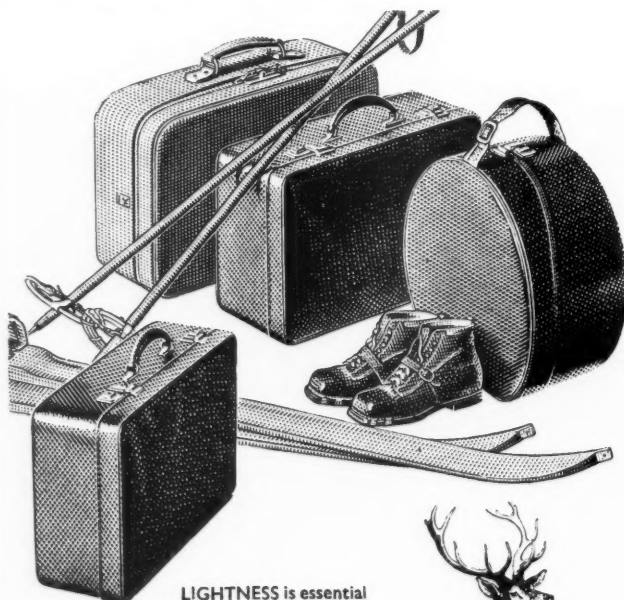
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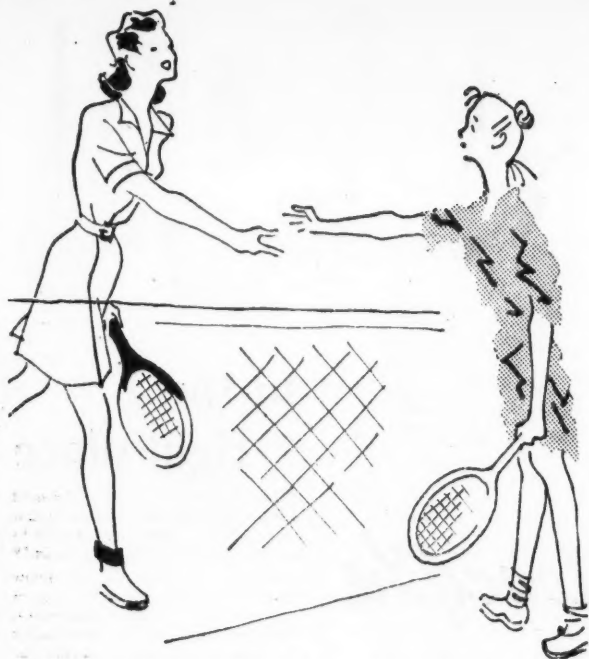
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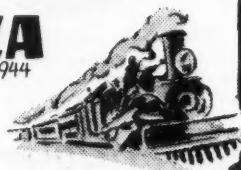
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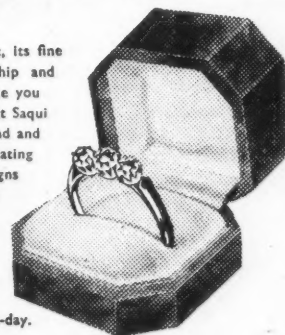
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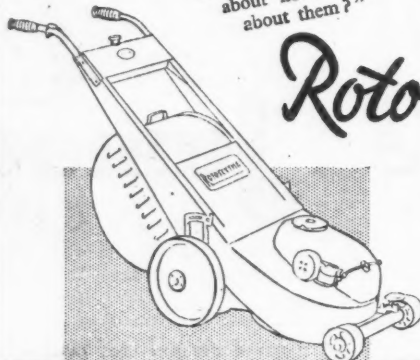
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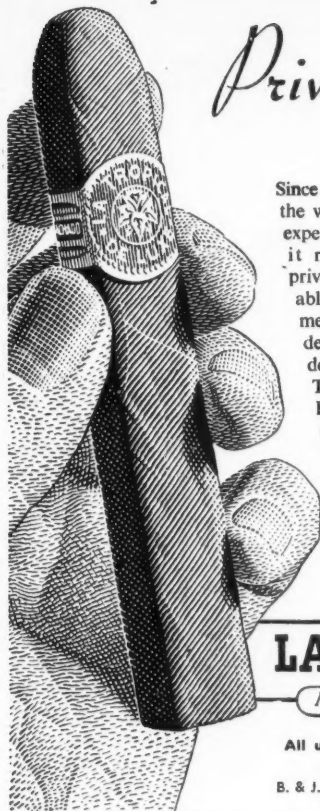
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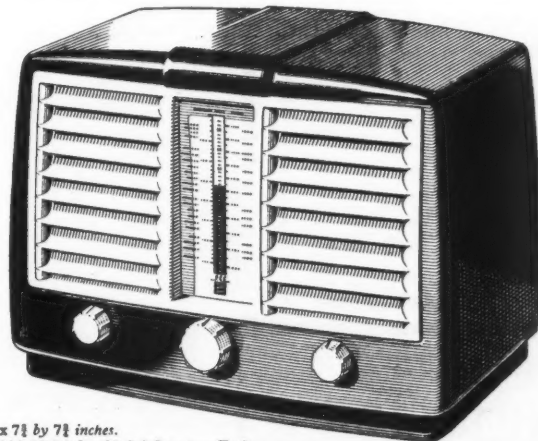
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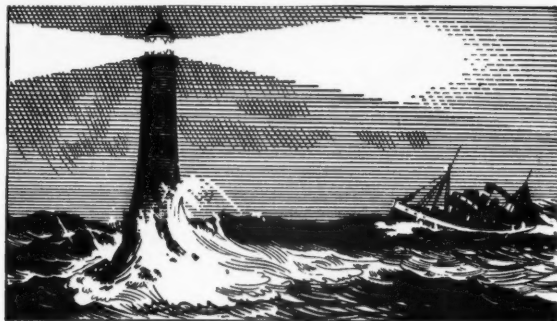
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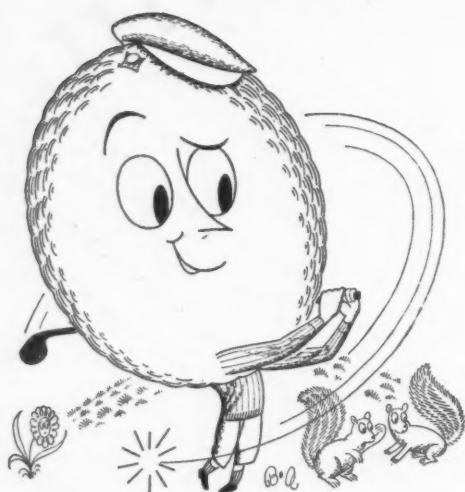
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# PUNCH

OR

The London Charivari



Vol. CCXII No. 5556

June 25 1947

## Charivaria

WE understand that the refusal of the Government to grant women equal pay for equal work does not apply to feminine M.P.s.

"The sons of many of the present Government M.P.s will one day be legislating at Westminster," predicts a political writer. Some people think that by then the House of Commons will be the only hereditary Chamber.



When several vats in Bedfordshire were struck by lightning, but undamaged, the beer in them was found to have improved considerably in quality. This is believed to be the first recorded case of a storm actually brewing.

A gloomy correspondent points out that so many plays are having short runs that it will take a long war to use them all up as revivals.

### The Law of Gravitation

"Thrown out of the balcony, several women hecklers simply moved down to the body of the hall."—*Daily Mail*.

It is suggested that Question-time in the House would prove ideal for broadcasting. A Ghost Voice could give the right answers in advance.

The B.B.C. explain that Mr. J. B. Priestley records his new series of broadcast talks at any time he feels like doing so. Listeners, however, are expected to feel like hearing them at 9.15 P.M. on Tuesdays.

The captain of a paddle-steamer reports that a cuckoo landed on his ship in mid-Channel recently. We understand that the first intimation of its arrival was a commotion in the crew's nest.

"In long-distance races," declares an international athlete, "the weight of any clothing worn begins to tell on the stamina after the first mile." This seems to bear out the theory that there were too many shirts on Tudor Minstrel when it ran in the Derby.



"Tenders are invited for driving two tunnels 5,700 ft. and 1,000 ft. long so as to reach the undersigned not later than 3 P.M. on 14-7-1947. . . —ELECTRICAL ENGINEER TO GOVERNMENT."

Announcement in Madras paper.

Aim for the floor of the office, boys!

A sports enthusiast complains that he just can't get his neck muscles accustomed to the exercise involved in watching high-speed tennis. He should begin somewhat farther down the scale—say chess.



## Interview at Lord's

**A** BURST of clapping which broke out in the Mound Stand during the lunch interval and was taken up all round the ground may have puzzled one or two neophytes on the first day of the second Test Match at Lord's. The occasion was, however, in its way a notable one. A well-known spectator had just completed his five thousandth consecutive anchovy sandwich eaten while watching first-class cricket in England.

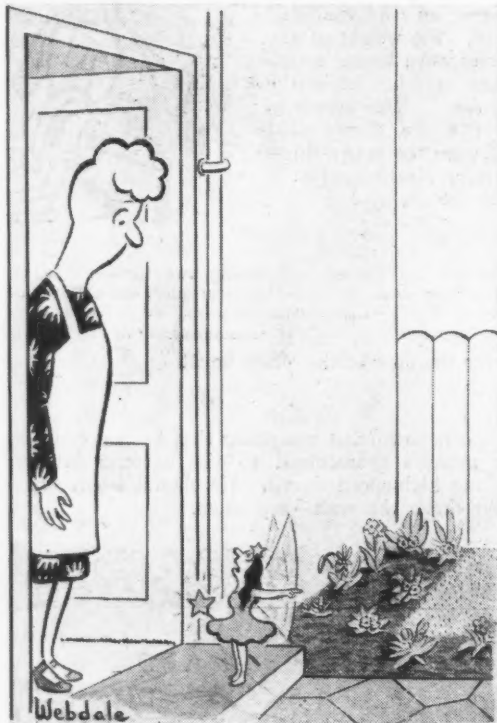
Interviewed afterwards by the press I made the following statement:

"I am naturally delighted to have reached the coveted figures. At the same time I should like to make it clear that the feat is well within the capabilities of any keen spectator who is willing to sacrifice variety in the interests of consistency. I should also like to pay tribute to my wife, but for whose unflagging efforts with the bread-knife this record could never have been attempted. Next season I hope to eat one hundred and fifty in May."

"You will continue to use anchovy?"

"Certainly. My advice to every young spectator is to choose a good fish-paste, preferably with a touch of sharpness in the flavour, and stick to it. Vegetable trimmings, such as lettuce or cress, should be avoided at all costs. Nothing takes a man's eye off the ball more surely than a strand of cress depending from his lower lip, unless it be a sausage-roll. I remember—of course it's years ago now—but I well remember missing a catch in the slips off Tate's bowling, simply and solely because I was brushing pastry-crumbs off my flannels at the time."

"You were eating a sausage-roll in the slips?"



"Pardon me, but there are Colorado beetles at the bottom of your garden."

"I was eating a sausage-roll, like a young fool, in the pavilion at Trent Bridge. Of course if one waits for the interval before eating, no very great harm is done; but how many spectators are willing to waste on sausage-rolls the time they might be spending out in the middle inspecting the pitch? No, no. Choose a smooth fish-paste, undo the packet between overs, and learn to eat without looking down, that's the secret of it."

"Would you care to give us your opinion of the present-day spectator?"

"I consider that the general level is high. Hard-boiled eggs, those bitter enemies of concentration, are happily a thing of the past. Men are more self-reliant, too, and better equipped, perhaps as a result of the war years. There is less borrowing of pencils to fill in score-cards than there used to be in my young days; and of course the drinking of ginger-beer out of stone bottles, which used to be such a curse to people on the rear benches at provincial grounds, has gone out altogether. The modern transparent bottles mark a big advance. But I am a little worried on the score of age. There are too many greybeards on the ground here to-day. It may seem ungenerous to exclude spectators whose cries of 'Bowled, sir!' and ready recognition of maiden overs have been for many years past of inestimable service to the game, but we have to look to the future. If we are to have a knowledgeable crowd when the Australians are over here in 1956, or 1960, what is the use of packing the stands this year with men who in the natural order of events cannot be expected to stand the strain of a long day's watching ten or a dozen years hence? It is to the young blood, to men in their early forties, that we should be giving a taste of Test Match cricket to-day."

"What, in your view, is the best age for watching cricket?"

"Speaking generally, a spectator reaches his prime between the ages of fifty and fifty-five. His eyesight is hardly impaired. His experience is ripe, but not yet rotten. His physical development allows him to sit motionless for hours without discomfort, and he has learnt the art of confining his observations to strangers to monosyllables. Later in life he will become aware of his bones after the first hour and will soliloquize endlessly about Woolley to take his mind off them. But not yet. He wears a waistcoat, which is at once more convenient for pencils than a pullover and less inclined to collect crumbs and cigar-ash than a cardigan. He is too old to make smacking noises with his lips when eating sandwiches and not old enough—I forget what he is not old enough to do, but it is something tiresome to the people on either side. Is there anything else you wish to know?"

"What is the attitude of the Mound Stand towards the members in the pavilion?"

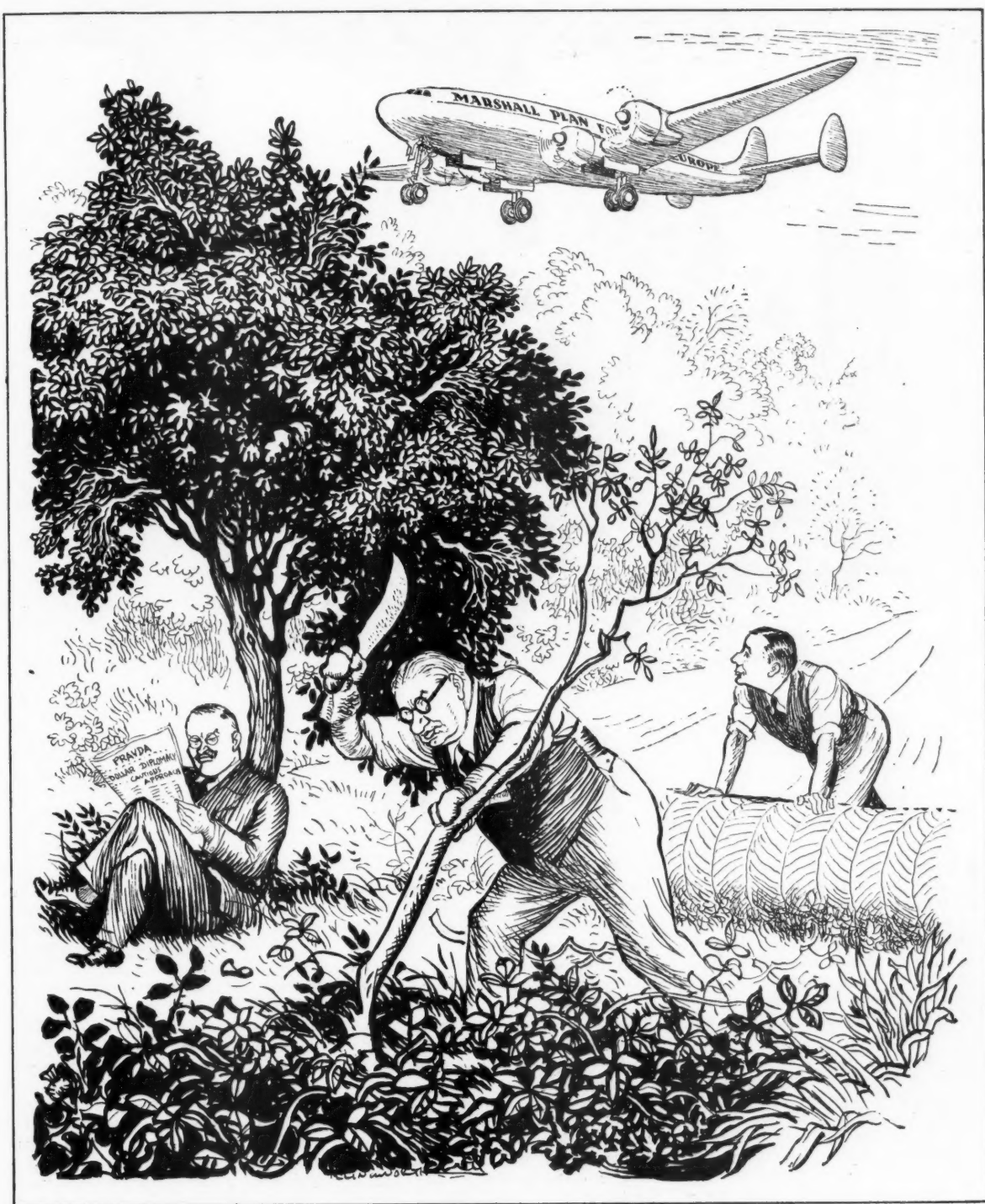
"We are aware that members have the opportunity of watching us eating our lunches through their binoculars, whereas we are unable to retaliate—partly because so few of us have binoculars but chiefly because the members retire elsewhere to feed. But we do not on that account consider that they should be refused admittance to the ground; our reason for demanding their exclusion is simply that the greater number of them are, as can be seen without optical aids, past their best as spectators. It may be doubted indeed whether one or two will be fit enough to turn out even for the 1948 series."

"One more question. Are you in favour of timeless Tests?"

"In view of the present shortage of anchovy paste—definitely, no."

H. F. E.





CLEARING THE GROUND



"Well, I just look down the list of runners till I find a French horse—then I stick a pin in it."

## The Cosmic Mess

"The Standard of Life"

THERE are so many wolves after the unfortunate Attorney-General that this column is quite sorry for him, and would not wantonly add itself to the pack. But he has laid so fascinating a trail about the "standard of life" that this column feels bound to follow it for a paragraph or two, quietly, without passion, and wholly helpfully.

The learned Attorney, it seems, began it all by saying: "It is probably true" (not very happily put, perhaps, but still) "to say that the standard of life of the average man and woman in this country is higher than it has ever been".

He was then torn to pieces by a million housewives, who asked if he had ever stood in a queue, and talked about the House of Commons restaurant, and other things.

Sir Hartley Shawcross then made

another speech to show the women that he had stood in a queue and knew all about the facts of life. He said (according to the *Daily Express*):

"I've stood in queues. I know the ingenuity that housewives have to show in preparing meals. I know how hard the middle-classes are hit."

So far, so good. Unhappily, as it seems to this column, he also said:

"I have not had butter or margarine on my bread for many years. That used to go for cooking. Now the baby gets it."

Now, it is impossible not to admire the fortitude of the parent who gives all his butter and margarine to the baby, and has not tasted the stuff, in the home, for "many years". But, if such a sacrifice is necessary, it is, this column sees, a little difficult to accept from the same authority the statement that "the standard of life of the average man is better than it has ever been".

But perhaps someone will say: "Sir Hartley was not thinking of himself. He is not an average man. He is a wealthy man who used to get butter before but now deservedly has none. He was thinking of the 'lower-income groups' who had no butter before, but have it now."

If anyone does say that, this column must introduce him to the lady (Edith A. M. White, of Lincs.) who wrote to the *Daily Express* as follows:

"Before the war my husband earned under £3 per week. My grocery bill was under 10s. per week, and for that sum we regularly had 3 lb. sugar, 2 lb. butter, ½ lb. margarine, and half a tub of other fat—also a dozen eggs, dried fruit—red salmon (tall tin, 11d.)—and a tin of fruit from an endless variety.

"We were also able to have cooked ham and tongue (with an occasional

whole ham)—and often half-pint of cream from the milkman. There were other items too, such as Devon cream, sandwich cakes—and dressed chickens for 3s. 6d and 4s. 6d—and I still hold the bills, Sir Hartley!

"To-day, my husband earns £5 per week and we are far worse fed than we've ever been. We get about half the meat we did—and of terribly poor quality (I notice the quality of things is never mentioned by these public speakers)."

The heart of this column warms to Mrs. White, especially about the "occasional whole ham". This column is glad that the Whites, too, used to enjoy an "occasional whole ham", and hopes that they will agree that the "occasional whole ham" is about the best test of a civilized "standard of life". Until the "occasional whole ham" returns (which this column does not expect to see for a long, long time) this column will be on Mrs. White's side.

Then there was Colonel Walter Elliot, M.P., who tackled the Attorney-General (in *The Times*) about calories, ignoring such vulgar things as hams and butter. He wrote:

"Sir John Orr, in his book *Fool, Health, and Income*, gave the consumption of the lowest-fed group in Great Britain as 2,317 calories a day, and of the next lowest group as 2,768. Taking the standard requirement at 2,810 calories he considered the two groups in question to be undernourished. As to the rest of the nation, about 50 per cent., he considered that they were living at a level of nutrition 'so high that on the average no improvement can be effected by increased consumption'.

"According to the most recent statements by the Ministry of Food, the average intake of the nation is now 2,300 calories for meals taken at home. To this a figure of some 200-300 calories may be added for meals and snacks 'out'. To have reduced the whole nation to the level of the lowest two groups admittedly unsatisfactory in 1936 is certainly an achievement. For the 50 per cent. whose level of nutrition before the war was adequate, it may well appear to be a collapse. Even for the groups to whose standard the rest of the population has been brought down it cannot be described as a triumph."

But, to be fair to Sir Hartley, as this column is eagerly seeking to be, he would probably say that he is not merely thinking, as is everyone else (a bad sign), about food. He wrote to *The Times* too, comparing the past unfavourably with "present conditions, with food scarce but fairly distributed, with school meals for children, relatively secure employment, children's allowances, and other social benefits . . . The health of the nation is better than ever before; there are more people in our schools, technical colleges, and universities than ever before. These

are not the indications of a collapsed standard of life".

Fair enough (though "food scarce" is not perhaps a bull point). But let us, too, think of other things than food. The full schools and colleges are desperately short of books—and many other things. Schoolmasters, questioned by the *Sunday Express*, seem to agree that "The boys are not half as strong as they used to be, and they tend to flag in the middle of a game . . ." "Their stamina is weaker and they cannot stand up to as much as the boys of ten years ago . . ." "Their stamina is not so good . . ." "The general standard of play is lower . . ." "They are far more prone to minor injuries . . ." "I am convinced that the present diet affects the boys' stamina . . ." The universities are not merely full but insanitary, and the "standard of life" is not what it was there. The old privacy has gone. Two undergraduates share the old single rooms. They must have all their meals in Hall, to which they march with their own marmalade and margarine (I'm sorry—food again). Huts desecrate the ancient quadrangles. Small things, doubtless, but they add up. Mr. X is, perhaps, in "relatively secure employment", but can Mrs. X get any help in the home—if she can afford it? The health of the nation is marvellous, maybe, but it's a job to get into a nursing-home. The

average baby, surely, finds it much more difficult to find a pram. The average women who write to the papers keep mentioning things like curtains, bed-linen, stockings, clothes, and furniture, but they are probably "politically ignorant". It costs 2½d. to send a letter across the street. The tax exacted on a five-bob theatre ticket is now 1/6½: in 1939 it was 8d. It is illegal to light that gas-stove. The "local" will not open to-night till 8.0 P.M., and it will close about 9.0, the beer being finished. The average cigarette costs 2d.

Hard as this column is trying, it finds it difficult to accept the Attorney-General's formula. And now, it sees, Sir Stafford Cripps has made a speech. What does he say? After abusing—even, according to one jubilant paper, "lashing"—the wretched housewives, Sir Stafford, addressing an audience of women, complained of the "unpatriotic propaganda of the Housewives' League: 'It is most necessary that you who are housewives but politically intelligent housewives should play your part in countering this propaganda'."

But he went on to say:

"Though we are much better off than many of our comrades on the continent of Europe, we have not yet been able to regain our pre-war standards, much less to improve on them as we would wish."

That, this column feels, is a sensible and sober statement: but he seems, after all, to be more with the Housewives than with Sir Hartley.

Personally, this column never did think that Hitler would do its standard of life much good. It still has hopes of Hartley. A. P. H.

## Six o'Clock

SIX o'clock's an idle hour  
Too late to wake, too soon to sleep,  
When ants collect in hordes to weep  
At dormice funerals; when jays  
Dig out their coarsest jokes, and small  
Intrepid windows, stealing rays  
Of gold, a moment's glory keep  
Before they fade into the wall.  
An idle hour, a shiftless hour  
When spiders' webs are broken by  
The dozy amblings of the fly,  
And scarlet sorrel seeds are spilled;  
The hour when every hive-queen  
mourns  
For homing honey-bags unfilled  
And wayward humble-bees that lie  
Drowned deep in gentian drinking-  
horns. O. D.



Harmony



**U**NTHINKING filmgoers attracted to *The Loves of Joanna Godden* (Director: CHARLES FRENCH) by the title's implication that this is the story of a siren with a devastating effect on man after man will only be disappointed; for though one can see the film as, in a way, a study of "a woman who loved three different men after their different fashions," as the synopsis suggests, one can see it far more easily as a farming story, an interesting sketch of country life with an unusual amount of English open air in it. I have not read SHEILA KAYE-SMITH's novel *Joanna Godden*, but I should doubt whether the addition of three words to the title signifies so marked a shift of emphasis in the film as whoever added them presumably hoped it would suggest. Here we have GOOGIE WITHERS, now well-established as a serious actress (who remembers the days when she was given the part of the mischievous blonde, in farce after hardworking farce?) as a determined, opinionated young woman who

## At the Pictures

ON ROMNEY MARSH

farming theme), and there are her troubles with her younger sister (JEAN KENT), whom she sends to school in Folkestone and makes a lady of; but the best of the picture is in the impression it gives (at least to an urban ignoramus) of the realities of agricultural life, and in the characters and scenes of Romney Marsh. There are several excellent small-part players who have brilliantly comic moments of their own—notably ETHEL COLERIDGE as a lighthouse-keeper's wife at Dungeness, and the always invaluable EDWARD RIGBY in a pleasing little scene where he describes a dream. This is a small-scale British film that often achieves remarkable tension and interest; well worth seeing.

After *The Upturned Glass* (Director: LAWRENCE HUNTINGTON), I fancy I can hear the ordinary moviegoer cry

Again murder! Again the hospital, the operation, the brilliant young surgeon! Yes, and again (I would add) the luxuriously - appointed house with the wide curving staircase as in *The Seventh Veil*, again the intermittent bursts of piano-playing (*Warsaw Concerto* kind of stuff, nice and dramatic in semitones), again the chance for some actress to be a Wicked Lady, again the child psychology, again — even — the deadly cliff at the end. The well-used ingredients, one might call these things, of many successful British films; and one might sup-

which the picture is made. There are no spectacular moments and hardly any noisy ones, but there is plenty of pleasure to be got from the quiet smoothness of playing and direction. I wouldn't too closely examine the probabilities, but probability does not in this instance matter much. My attention was continuously held, and I applaud among others JAMES MASON as the surgeon, ROSAMUND JOHN as the anxious lady with whom he is in love, ANN STEPHENS as her little daughter, and certainly the director.

One can hardly take *The Perils of Pauline* (Director: GEORGE MARSHALL) seriously as an authentic account of the life, or even the career, of the great Pearl White, the film-serial queen, for the producers have made it simply a miscellany for displaying the talents of BETTY HUTTON, and an amusing one; but—as always when the central character is a well-known real person in show-business—the background, the foundation and the crises of the plot are all steamy with emotional melodrama. I have cautiously suggested possible reasons for this before; however, the truth is no doubt that not merely do the conditions behind the making of this sort of film encourage such an atmosphere, but also a great many people like it. Ah, well . . . Among the parts of this one that appealed to me were some of Miss HUTTON's completely (I imagine) out-of-character songs—presumably no one will defend the proposition that Pearl White in the 1914 period really had songs of the Betty Hutton kind to sing, or could have sung them in the Hutton manner if she had. There are also the entertaining glimpses of the way the old silent films were flung together, and a number of individual, almost self-contained "turns" such as the very funny elocution lesson by BILLY DE WOLFE. The Technicolor is . . . cheerful, but I don't see the particular advantage in it apart from the way it points up the contrast when we are shown a little of the sort of black-and-white film that made Pearl White a familiar name.

*Dual Alibi* (Director: ALFRED TRAVERS) is a very minor British effort, redeemed occasionally by a touch of pleasant or skillful portraiture. TERENCE DE MARNEY as the flash villain comes best out of this—in spite of the fact that HERBERT LOM, always a good actor, has the advantage of him in sheer quantity by appearing as identical twins. R. M.



(The Loves of Joanna Godden)

### FAIR FARMER'S SURROUND

Martin Trevor . . . . .	DEREK BOND
Collard . . . . .	CHIPS RAFFERTY
Joanna . . . . .	GOOGIE WITHERS
Arthur Alce . . . . .	JOHN MCCALLUM

after the death of her father runs his farm according to her own ideas. Period, 1905-6, when this kind of thing was no doubt even more shocking and distressing to the experienced rural mind than it is now. Meanwhile, there are her three "loves" (who, to be sure, have their place in the

pose that no piece that shuffled together so many of them could hold a constant filmgoer's attention. One would be wrong; *The Upturned Glass* is almost continuously full of interest. To pin down the reason for this is not easy, but I suggest that it lies in the unobtrusive competence and skill with

# HOLIDAY BRITISHER



## Talking of Ticket Machines

IF anyone tells you ticket-machines have no character, don't believe them. Behind those bleak exteriors glows a warm flood of feeling of which most people are unaware until it is quenched by the "not in use" sign. I have made a deep and lasting study of the psychology of ticket-machines, and I know.

They possess a humanity all their own, and one with which it is a pleasure to have been associated. From the youngest threehalfpenny to the oldest sixpenny, they love and trust me. Often when I have scarce known where to turn for a crust of bread I have appealed to my favourite machine at Cockfosters, and in return for a bent farthing it has coughed up four bright and shining pennies. Few, indeed, of my friends would have done as much.

Every day I journey from station to station visiting the machines, much as other people go to the Zoo. It does my heart good to see them standing there; strong and silent, but oh, so sensitive! I watch the impatient crowds as they struggle for vantage in front of them. Here is a woman trying to palm off a worn sixpence. With a thin, disdainful tinkle the intelligent creature returns the coin over and over again. But just to prove how character counts, another machine round the corner gobbles the sixpence gratefully, and returns the ticket and change its pal had refused.

What do these solemn robots think about the jostling men and women who swirl in front of them day after day? Not much. They consider them to be grossly unreliable.

I once saw a man hitting a poor defenceless threehalfpenny. He was aiming great blows with the flat of his hand all over its body. The threehalfpenny bore it for several seconds, and then a very queer thing happened.

It opened its slot extra wide and bit the man so hard that he bled.

Actually the others dislike this kind of behaviour. They say it lets down the side. But threehalfpennies are notably quick-tempered. This is partly owing to an inferiority complex. The fact that they don't give change like the rest puts them on a level with those rather antiquated machines one sees on the Inner Circle; and they resent this.

I hate to have to admit it, but ticket-machines are terrible snobs. This is the one really bad streak in the pure gold of their virtues. No Tube machine has a good word for an Inner Circle machine. The very thought of the trough into which they spew their tickets makes them fairly shake with ribald laughter.

On the other hand the Inner Circles regard themselves as the only dignified ticket-machines in a world of upstarts. Hence the phrase "She only moves in Inner Circles," which is a byword of respectability. When first they knew about this business of giving change they were horrified. One old thing who had worn crinolines when first she had been installed at Praed Street was overheard to say "Whatever next, I should like to know!" and her very starchy companion replied "Telling them *where* to change, I shouldn't wonder!"

As for platform-machines, they are considered to be so beyond the pale that no self-respecting Tube or Inner Circle would dream of mentioning them.

Be that as it may, there is one fervent feeling that binds them together as one kin. They all absolutely loathe having their innards exposed. Some machines have been known to break down completely on the approach of the man with the keys, and to weep floods of tickets all over the place.



## An Innocent in Britain

(Mr. Punch's special correspondent is on tour to find out how the land lies for visitors from overseas.)

### III—Winchester and the Hampshire Basin

IT is sixty-four miles from London to Winchester, sixty-four miles of good road (A.3) over clay, heath and chalk. But I had not cycled far before I realized that by adopting this mode of transport I was neglecting my duties as a guide. What had happened to my vow that I would shirk nothing and live exactly as our transatlantic visitors would live? So I dismounted, pushed my bike into the left-luggage office of Waterloo Station and caught the eleven-thirty by the skin of my teeth. Luckily I happened to have a ticket.

Of the journey itself I cannot speak too highly. At this time of year the Gault and Upper Greensand are at their best, while the Lower Cretaceous . . . Oh, who can say



Tourist being welcomed to Winchester.

(From an old MS.)

anything new about that! Americans sometimes complain that our trains are dusty, but as far as I could see—almost across the carriage—there was nothing to complain about in this one. What's the good of having sunlight streaming in through the windows if you can't have a few motes dancing in it? Admittedly the train was uncomfortably packed, but only reasonably so. The great thing about Britain is that it isn't three thousand miles across: you can't have eramp for *very* long on British railways.

Dead on time, then, at exactly seven minutes past one o'clock, the "Precursor Special" drew into Winchester. The operation was performed very quietly and respectfully, as though the locomotive sensed the anachronism it was perpetrating by appearing, hot and blowing, in this shrine of history. Winchester, you see, is the old capital city of England, older than London, older, it is said, than

Rome. Long before the Romans came it was the White City (Caer Gwent) of the Celts. As Venta Belgarum it was a flourishing wool town (it clothed the Roman legions), the meeting place of six Roman roads and the centre of a rich agricultural district. It became the court of kings and princes from the great Alfred to the most redeless of the long line of Æthels—Bert, Stan, Bald, Wald, and so on. To mention only Egbert, Alfred, Edward the Elder and Canute should give you some idea how many kings were buried here.

I am going too fast?

The point I want to make is this—that Winchester has every right to be called (though it doesn't sound right, somehow) the vice-capital of Britain. Discussing this with one of the oldest inhabitants in the vaults of the Westgate Hotel, I put the question:

"Does Winchester nurse any hopes of a come-back?"

"Maybe," he said, "but Lunnon be gettin' too far ahead."

"You mean in population? See, London has about seven millions and Winchester . . ."

"Twenty-odd thousand, maybe. But it's not that: look at Washington and New York . . ."

I turned instinctively to the west and saw his point—a very good point, I thought.

"Naoh," he went on, "you're not much good without money these days and now they've shifted the Mint . . ."

"Shifted the Mint!"

"Aye, to Lunnon. Promised us faithfully he did it would stay in Winchester along of the Exchequer."

"Who promised?"

"That King John—'im an' 'is charter!"

He emphasized his disgust by banging his empty tankard on the table and I did what I could to comfort him in his loss.

Other people I spoke to were equally indignant about the Mint. The Itchen might be smaller than the Thames, Yorkshire undoubtedly had stolen the wool trade, but Winchester's decline was primarily the result of a shameful betrayal. Look at the Telephone Directory and you'll see how popular the name John is in Winchester!

All right, Mrs. Upscheider, I'm coming. What do you want to see first? The forum? The basilica? Oh, yes of course—the cathedral. All got your macintoshes?

Well, now, from here the cathedral church of St. Swithin doesn't look very big, does it? But notice the peculiar optical effect as we approach. As a matter of fact this is the longest church of its kind in the world—556 feet to be exact. The central tower is unusually low . . . no, not sawn-off, Miss Franklin . . . even for the Normans, and the building as a whole is severely plain, not to say "utility" in character. Then, as now, war seemed to encourage functionalism. Indeed, ladies, the parallels between the two post-war periods are Northgate and Southgate were pulled down in 1781 . . . I'm sorry, I must have turned over two pages . . . between the two post-war periods are striking. The Board of Trade have, however, been compelled to cancel their Domesday census.

And now, perhaps, you will follow me inside. The transepts are the original Norman, massive and bold: the nave is perpendicular, the work of Bishop Edington (1346–1366) and the famous . . . pencil? Oh, I shouldn't bother to take it all down, Miss Franklin . . . and the famous William de Wykeham who also founded the college. . . .



Here in the presbytery are the mortuary chests containing the bones of Saxon kings. These have been scattered (by Cromwell types) and collected up again (by confirmed osteopaths) so often that we can guarantee their toughness, at least. Turning to the clerestory . . .

We'll leave Jane Austen (in the north aisle), the great screen, the first American Bible and the lady-chapel until after lunch which, in theory at least, could be taken at the mediæval almshouse down in the reeds by the river. The Hospital of St. Cross, founded by Henry de Blois in 1136 (if my memory serves me right), no longer guarantees to supply a hundred free dinners daily to the needy, but it still dispenses a very good line in free bread and beer. We could do with a few more almshouses in Britain, especially in some of our rambling London suburbs.

If you can do without lunch and reserve your appetite for tea, so much the better; for it is strawberry-time in Hampshire, and anything bigger and sweeter and more delectable than Hampshire strawberries would be slightly indecent. Yes, I know you grow certain species of *Fragaria* in Virginia, Texas and elsewhere, but sugar for sugar, cream for cream, are they really to be compared with these? Go down to Hants in strawberry-time: it isn't far from London.

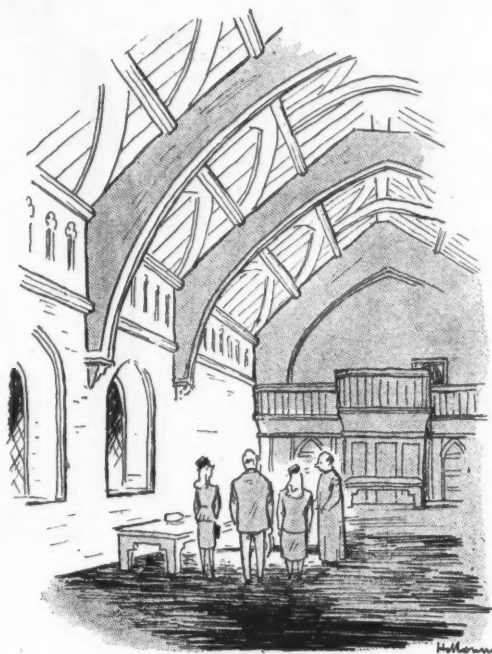
With quite enough history for one day, thank you, it is time to study the rival attractions of Winchester and district. Well, right here on the door-step is the New Forest. It was here that Rufus met with the unfortunate accident that . . . Sorry. There's not much big-game



"... peculiar optical effect as we approach."

hunting here these days, but if you have a Winchester rifle I should like to remind you that it gets its name, not from the old capital of England, but from Mr. Oliver F. Winchester, an American manufacturer. Yes, I thought that would amuse you. The forest was once a favourite retreat and recreation ground of the wealthy, but to-day most of

the clearings are inhabited by struggling novelists (in caravans) and hard-working settlers. Among those oaks and pines the New Englander may well be smitten by home-sickness. Here, too, you will find the last of our native reservations—large tracts of forest marked off several centuries ago by the Admiralty to supply the Navy with heart of oak.



"... a very good line in free bread and beer."

If you are interested in dry-fly fishing have a good look at the Izaak Walton window in the Winchester library—placed there "By the fishermen of the world"—and then take your pick of the lovely trout streams on the chalk hills. Your visit to Billingsgate should have put you *au fait* with the lingo, so you will be set for an excellent day's sport. This is the dry-fly fisherman's paradise.

Farming, by the way, is extensive.

Then there is cricket. You won't have mastered the principles of the game yet, so a few trips to Portsmouth, Southampton or Bournemouth will be well worth while. In July Middlesex are at Portsmouth and I shouldn't be a bit surprised . . . of course, he's a bit weak against out-swingers . . . up the wicket to the chinamen . . . one particular hook-shot . . . anyway, let me know what you think of him. Will you?

And so, tourists, we leave Winchester and environs, turn our backs on the soft dissolving curves of the downlands, the rich meadows and tasty orchards, the forests and slow-moving streams, but not without a last look at the squat tower of St. Swithin's and the mighty statue of King Alfred. And not, if I can squeeze it in, without a peep at the famous Round Table of King Arthur in the Norman castle. Yes, he was a *good* king, Mrs. Upscheider, but I forget exactly when; and his table shows signs, according to certain authorities, of having been repainted shortly before the visit of Charles V in 1522.

Now, then. Which way shall we go?

HOD.



"Nothing vacant at the moment, sir, but if you'd care to call later there's always a chance that some of our guests may have been arrested."

## Bong

"I SAY."  
 "Mmmm?"  
 "Oh, I'm sorry. Were you listening to the wireless?"  
 "No, no. Go on."  
 "I only wanted to ask you..."  
 BONG  
 "What were you saying?"  
 BONG  
 "Oh, it doesn't matter now. It was only that..."  
 BONG  
 "Well? Carry on. Only what?"  
 BONG  
 "But it doesn't matter now. Forget about it."  
 BONG  
 "How can I forget about it when..."  
 BONG

"... when you haven't even asked..."  
 BONG  
 "... asked me?"  
 BONG  
 "But I only wondered if you happened to know..."  
 BONG  
 "... the time."  
 "What a silly question! Can't you hear Big Ben striking?"  
 "I told you it didn't matter."  
 "Oh."  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 "I say."  
 "Mmmm?"  
 "Was that nine o'clock or ten o'clock?"

"I don't know. Didn't you count?"  
 "No."  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 "I say."  
 "Oh, what do you want?"  
 "Is Big Ben broadcast at ten o'clock as well as at nine?"  
 "Don't you ever...? Er..."  
 "Well, is it?"  
 "Oh, go and dial T I M if you want to know the time. Can't you see I'm busy?"  
 o o

## Bluff Corner

"Will person who sent anonymous letter to Miss I. B— Apologise, or proceedings will be taken."—*Advt. in Yorks. paper.*





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# FACTS OF THE CASE

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## H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

**L**AST week I received the following, printed in a large number of colours, several of which I did not know:

### THE LIGHTS O' LONDON HOLIDAY LEAGUE

Proprietor and Hon. Sec., BLACKIE WELSON.

DEAR SIR,—No! Too formal by half. Let's get on the right footing straight off—Chum! Well, chum, as we know each other, I am going to tell you all about the Holiday of your Dreams, now come true.

I expect you have often got tired of the old-fashioned holiday at the seaside; on the moors or by the lakes. Perhaps you have even tried a holiday in a big town for a change and you have found it lonely and dull. Well, chum, that's all a thing of the past now. For the first time a London holiday will be within the reach of the ordinary man—and what a holiday! Bright companionship! Well-organized pleasure! Inclusive rates! Bring your family, bring your friends, bring your pets, and share with the jolliest crowd you have ever met a week of good food, hearty fun and all the sparkle of a great city. From the moment you arrive to the moment you leave there is not a second wasted in which you might be enjoying yourself under our care.

Centres are open at Balham (The Conifers, Tuffington Road), Ponders End (Twilch, Jubilee Estate) and Stoke Newington (Solferino, Viaduct Way). Here is the programme of a typical week at Balham.

**SATURDAY.** Arrival. Weighing-in. Welcome by an ex-mayor. Exchange of Christian names. A walk round the shops. Letters home (choice of twelve). *High Tea*. Meetings of committees. Nourishing *Supper* (prize for the man with the loudest laugh). Non-stop dancing till 5 A.M.

**SUNDAY.**—6.30 A.M. Keep-fit. 8, *Breakfast* and practical jokes. 9, Manly talk and inoffensive service by padre. 9.15 (approx.), Croquet. If wet, Indoor Croquet. *Gala Lunch* to Blackie Welson. Visit to National Gallery, Tate Gallery, British Museum, Wallace Collection, Natural History Museum, Science Museum, Geological Museum. Home for *Book-Tea* (Lorna Doone). Rehearsals of amateur dramatic groups ("Merrie England," "Cavalcade," "Where the Rainbow Ends"). *Dinner* to strains of brass band. The Quiet Hour (Readings from Beverley Nichols will be given through the public address system). 9 P.M. onwards, either Talk with lantern slides on literary associations of South London or Wild West party.

**MONDAY, TUESDAY.**—Heats, semi-finals and finals of community singing competitions.

**WEDNESDAY.**—Keep-fit, *Breakfast* and exchange of mail. Expedition to Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, Tower of London, County Hall, Elephant and Castle, Blackwall Tunnel. Back for blindfold *Lunch*. Afternoon, dental inspection. Second rehearsal of dramatic groups. *Gala Tea* to Blackie Welson. Gardening. Break for *Dinner*. Gardening till light fails. Competition for best speech on "What I have enjoyed most since I came to The Conifers."

**THURSDAY.**—All-day hike. Balham Common, Clapham Common, Tooting Bec, Streatham Common, Dulwich Park, etc. Evening, dress rehearsal for dramatic groups. All-night visit to Clapham Junction Goods Yard.

**FRIDAY.**—*Breakfast*, with patter comedian. Morning and afternoon, group photographs. After tea, performance of "Merrie England." *Gala Dinner* to Blackie Welson. Performance of "Cavalcade." Apple-pie beds.

**SATURDAY.**—*Gala Breakfast* to Blackie Welson. Reception of fraternal delegates from Twilch and Solferino. Performance of "Where the Rainbow Ends." Exchange of addresses. *Grand Farewell Luncheon* with prize packets for all containing signed photograph of Blackie Welson and Reunion brochure. Weighing-out. Departure.

See what last year's Welsonites have to say:

"Three Girls in Slacks" wire: Thanks muchly Blackie for perfectly wizard time aurevoirski till next year.

Lady Y, of Blackpool, writes: Never since I came out have I had so much jollity in so short a time. Not a minute for moping must be the motto of The Conifers. *P.S.*—What is the recipe for that delightful eel-dumping?

Department of Classical Philology,  
Hawes-Tublett Block,  
The University,  
Huddersfield.

"B." Welson, Esq.

SIR,—I wish to place on record my appreciation of the assistance I received from your staff at a time of considerable personal discomfort: without their co-operation the recovery of my reading-glasses might well have been considerably delayed. I am most grateful for the efficiency and courtesy with which the problem of lost property is tackled in your establishment.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) PROFESSOR Z, B. Litt.

Miss T., of Ryde, I.O.W., writes: I feel I just must thank you. After a week at The Conifers I have completely lost my unhealthy fat and recovered from the sunburn which was making life so uncomfortable. Thank you for helping me to get out of the bad habit of hogging it in bed.

Among other adjectives used by admirers are "Splendiferous," "Sizzling" and "Sardanapalian."

And now the Camp Fire Song, with which all Welsonites begin and end each happy day. Why not learn it before you come?

*Verse*

Our Leader, Blackie Welson, has a heart that's made of gold,  
Like someone in the stories that Scheherazade told.  
He thinks nothing too much trouble if it gives us any fun,  
So sign on with Cap'n Blackie and your troubles all are done.

*Chorus*

Never a moment in time when the moment reminds us  
Of its own existence.

The moments pass and between the end of the week and  
its beginning

Is only the sound of laughter and a small payment.

This year, by the signing on the dotted line, becomes  
next year,

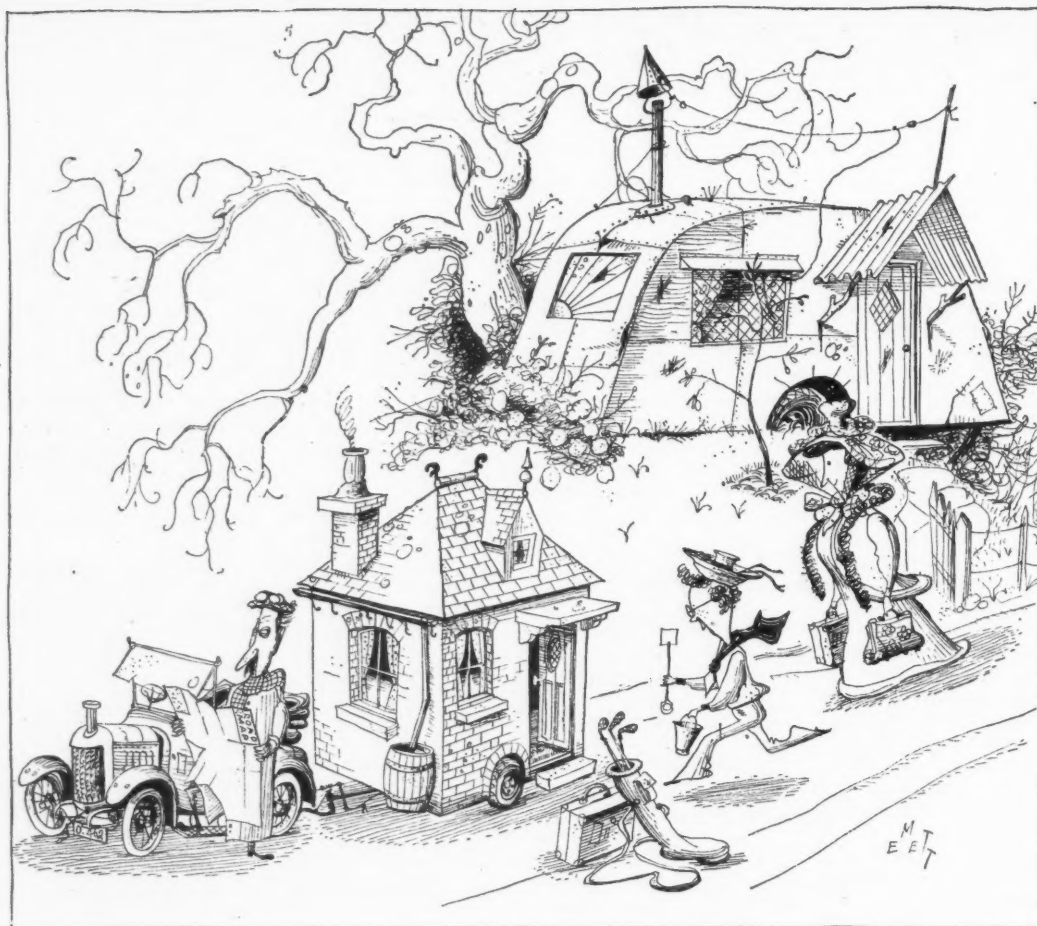
And between sometime and never only the fall of the  
sycamore leaf on the roof.

*There is not a second to lose. Enrol at once on the enclosed Business Reply Telegram.*

"White satin Wedding Gown, with short train, also Headdress; 1 Bridesmaid's Outfit, worn once; 3-stone diamond Engagement Ring, on twist platinum setting; good bargain."

*Advt. in "Liverpool Echo."*

No bridegroom (as new)?



## The Human Races

**T**HE human races  
All live where time and space is;  
Their nature uniformly base is.

The Nordic races  
Hop round in continual metastasis  
Leaving hideous industrial traces.

The Mongol races  
Have flat faces  
And live in the most extensive places.

The Hamitic races  
Play in jazz bands with wild grimaces  
And wear purple shoe-laces.

The Mediterranean races  
Have many graces  
And like to fill their lives with embraces.

The Semitic races  
Divide their time between the oasis  
And the widest of wide open spaces.

The Celtic races  
Drink whisky by the dozen cases;  
Each man can hold as much as his own weight displaces

The Alpine races  
Live on top or half-way up or at the bases  
Of mountains where the air is vilely cold but braces.

The Coptic races  
Walk in processions at unseemly paces  
Carrying enormous maces.

The Carib races  
Inhabit upturned carapaces,  
Eating seaweed, mussel shells, and uncooked daces.

The Balkan races  
Live roughly north-west of the place where Thrace is.  
Their conduct a perpetual disgrace is.

The human races  
All live where time and space is;  
Their nature uniformly base is.





## LONDON PRIDE

[Eros returns to Piccadilly Circus on June 28th.]

**MONDAY, June 16th.**—

In the House of Commons one can tell well in advance what the result of a division is going to be. What Lord ADDISON, Leader of the House of Lords, called a "machine majority"—although he was referring to something else—ensures that the Government gets a win in the division lobbies every time. But in the House of Peers, the position is quite different.

There, the Government is in a minority of something like ten to one, and, as the Transport Bill makes its turgid passage through the House, Government *defeats* are becoming almost as routine as Government *victories* are in "another place."

It is all done with the gentle, well-bred courtesy habitual to the Upper House of Parliament, with only the rarest of "breezes." Even these are perhaps more accurately described as zephyrs, compared with the hurricane efforts of the Commons.

Anyway, the Bill is still before their Lordships, and there were some more defeats to-day to add to those recorded last week. Noble supporters of the Government went about with the foot-weary air of men who longed for the comforts of a plebeian five-day week and eight-hour day. But Lord AMMON, the genial Government Chief Whip, who himself never seems to take any time off, kept their noses to the grindstone—if that is an apt simile in this connection.

So, slowly and painfully, the Bill made its way. Sometime the measure will return to the House of Commons, and then the Government will have to decide whether the amendments shall be allowed to live or whether they shall die. And then the Lords will have to decide whether they shall abandon the poor innocent little mites or fight for them.

When that time comes there may be some excitement. But, until then, there are more exciting things than the passage of the Bill through the Lords.

In the Commons there was a harrowing debate in which Sir ALAN HERBERT, detailing the theatres' difficulties, appeared to prove that they are permanently empty. Although knowing that Sir ALAN's own shows disproved the theory, Members seemed quite impressed by the optical illusion. Mr. HUGH DALTON, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, did *not*, and that was that. Sir ALAN worked it out like this:

"Bad weather is bad for the theatre, because people want to stay home in

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done:

**Monday, June 16th.**—House of Lords: Defeat. House of Commons: Back-Stage Story of the Stage.

**Tuesday, June 17th.**—House of Lords: As Yesterday. House of Commons: Concessions!

**Wednesday, June 18th.**—House of Commons: Scottish Affairs.

**Thursday, June 19th.**—House of Commons: Foreign Affairs are the Topic.

the dry. Good weather is bad, too, because people want to be in the open air. Before holidays, people want to save up. After holidays, they have no money. At times of national mourning people do not go to shows. At times of national rejoicing the Government provides amusements free of charge. On the only two really good days for the theatre—Christmas Day and Good Friday—the theatres are shut."



*And*

### Impressions of Parliamentarians

8. MR. H. McNEIL (Greenock)

But Mr. DALTON was obstinate about it, and a motion to halve the Entertainments Tax was rejected. He did, however, suggest an unofficial working party to assist the "living theatre."

Mr. VAL McENTEE, the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, was asked whether he would arrange for cigarettes to be made available to M.P.s at half-a-crown for twenty, but said this could be done only by diverting from the employees' canteen the short supplies of "gaspers." And that *nobody* seemed to want.

**TUESDAY, June 17th.**—Their Lordships continued the process of chastening the Government, and a lot more alterations were made in the Transport Bill.

LORD ADDISON, whose medical training no doubt has hardened him to watching surgical operations, took a

few more Government defeats with his normal calm. Government Peers walked dutifully through the division lobbies, and bowed to the inevitable in the shape of a whacking majority against them. And so the Bill went on. . . .

The Commons found the Government, in the person of Mr. HUGH DALTON, in a generous mood. He simply splashed millions about, giving a relief from taxation here and there with the grand air of a man with unlimited reserves of treasure. Motorists (though not those with pre-war models) and housewives came in for a bit of benevolence, and with the casual manner of one who should say "That's nothing to me!" the Chancellor knocked £8,000,000 off the duty on electrical goods—and then back-dated the concession to last Budget Day, just to round it off.

For motorists he had a gift (which some Members seemed to regard with scepticism) of a cut in the tax. On new cars this is to be a flat sum of £10 a year, irrespective of horse-power. But cars costing £1,000 or more will have their purchase tax put up from thirty-three and one-third per cent. to sixty-six and two-thirds, *ad valorem*. And, said Mr. DALTON, in the manner of the market-place, nothing more on petrol, either.

As though almost ashamed to look a gift horse-power in the cylinders, Members accepted the benevolence with cheers. But they seemed to have some lingering doubts whether it *was* a gift, and whether it was not really the traditional Scots present of a homing pigeon. Chancellors, they know, do not often give things away.

But there was no doubting the genuineness of the gift the Chancellor made next. He took the purchase tax off things like electric irons, electric cookers, and (perhaps) electric washing machines. Women Members expressed the view that the Government owed it to the nation's "small" to make electric ironing cheaper. Mr. DALTON nodded sympathetically—and the trick was done.

**WEDNESDAY, June 18th.**—It is a frequent shout of triumph in the House of Commons that some Member has "let the cat out of the bag." Some time in the middle of the night, when the House was still plodding steadily through the Committee stage of the Finance Bill, Mr. GEORGE WALLACE suddenly sat up with a jerk and looked with some suspicion at his neighbours.



*"I gather she's offering equal pay for equal work."*

For, from the immediate locality of Mr. WALLACE, sitting eager to make his speech, there had come a long and plaintive "*Miau!*" Everybody put on that expression all men wear in such circumstances, when each hopes the other has not heard. But then Mr. WALLACE, with an incredulous expression in his eyes, dived to the floor and made a grab—just in time to miss a cat which had somehow strolled into the Chamber. As if annoyed to find her nocturnal ramble thus interrupted, Minnie, for many years the respected Rodent Officer of the Houses of Parliament, strode majestically out.

It was certainly the most interesting interlude of the day's proceedings. The business of the day—Wednesday, that is—was the government of Scotland, and all wise non-Scots (to use a neutral term) made a point of keeping out of the debate. When Scot meets Scot things are apt to happen—especially to Sassenachs—but to-day was an exception, and practically nothing at all happened to anybody.

Before the debate began Mr. CREECH JONES, the Colonial Secretary, announced that Ceylon is to have a new constitution which will make her self-governing "within the British Commonwealth of Nations."

But most people were thinking of Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, the Foreign Secretary, who had flown to Paris to talk to the French Government about the United States plan to give economic help to Europe. And on

**THURSDAY, June 19th**, he was back in time to take part in a foreign affairs debate opened by Mr. ANTHONY EDEN with a shrewd survey of the whole world, dwelling longest on the position in Eastern Europe,

Hungary and Germany. He was frank with the Soviet Government about its attitude to the American plan—but in a friendly and diplomatic way.

Mr. BEVIN was at least as friendly and diplomatic when the time came for him to make a statement, in the earlier part of the debate, on his consultations with M. BIDAULT in Paris. But he was forthright enough when he spoke later of what was going on in Hungary, Bulgaria and other countries.

## Songs from the Other Side

### The Black Shawl

**I** HAVE seen one beauty beside the Liffey,  
On the quays of Dublin where the sea-gulls call,  
Only one beauty, but that a brave one—  
An old woman in a black shawl.

Frail, with the face of a wasted cameo  
Chiselled by hunger, lissom and tall,  
With hair the winter of a red beech-leaf  
Austerely framed in a black shawl.

You may keep your young ones, they'll ne'er be like her,  
She hasn't a trace of their ways at all,  
Who brought Venice to a Dublin quayside  
Queening it there in her black shawl.

H. P. E.



**RICHARD II** at Stratford is another good production by Mr. WALTER HUDD; not quite so exciting as his *Twelfth Night* but very sound, and distinguished by much imaginative invention, such as the silhouette of the beaten army tottering across the back of a darkened stage against a dying sky, telling a whole story of hopelessness in a few weary movements, or the presentation of the interrupted fight between *Bolingbroke* and *Mowbray* out of sight on the other side of the royal stand, so that the *King* faces us as he turns from the field, making his indecision doubly effective. With Mr. HUDD such enrichments are one with the general embroidery of the play. He is a producer who constantly puts Shakespeare first. Mr. HAL BURTON's sets, architecturally ambitious, include gargoyles and three-dimensional saints and solid helpings of desirable feudal residences, but their style and variety is pleasing and his lovely mock-tapestry curtain is a graceful reminder of the period.

Is Mr. ROBERT HARRIS's *Richard* too likeable a man for the selfish, wilful weakling, too much a tired, well-meaning king and not enough the proud, arrogant youth who flung away the crown? Perhaps. Certainly the spoilt-boy aspect of *Richard's* character is hardly here; but Mr. HARRIS, who speaks his lines splendidly, has dignity to impress the essential tragedy and the power to strike pity with the sudden flaring up of futile passion. This is beyond doubt his best performance at Stratford. *Bolingbroke*, to have done what he did, must have had more drive than Mr. MICHAEL GOLDEN, though he is consistent, gives him, and Mr. JOHN RUDDOCK scarcely does justice to the great opportunities of *John of Gaunt*. I liked Mr. PAUL STEPHENSON's *Bishop*, Mr. MILES EASON's *Mowbray* and Mr. DONALD SINDEN's *Aumerle*, the latter a very promising performance. Miss BEATRIX LEHMANN injects gloom of rare inspissation into the brief appearance of the widowed *Duchess*, and as the young *Queen* Miss JOY PARKER looks enchanting and plays the garden scene with spirit.

## At the Play

**RICHARD II (STRATFORD)—HE WHO GETS SLAPPED (DUCHESS)—S.S. GLENCAIRN (MERCURY)**

At the Duchess you can see a high-brow's picnic, LEONID ANDREYEV's *He Who Gets Slapped*, in a version by Miss JUDITH GUTHRIE; if you really want to. Personally I think it a pretentious play which says very little in too theatrical a manner. The better producers have always liked it, presumably for its overcharge of smouldering passion and for the technical fun of subduing a large and unruly crowd. On the other side of the footlights, however, its errant swinging

certain pathos from the idea of the Little Man, innocent and baffled, being crushed by the brutality of an audience standing for the world; but too often the symbols and the high-lit crises of a novelettish story merely cancel out, and when the clown poisons the silly little equestrienne (as well as himself) to save her from the embraces of a wicked baron no acting and no production can prevent us from wondering, as we reach eagerly for our hat, how it came about that we should stray in such company into the world of Victoria Cross. The victim, whose Cockney accent conflicts curiously with her discovery in Corsica, is well taken by Miss AUDREY FILDES, and Miss MARGARET DIAMOND as a human volcano and Mr. ARNOLD MARLÉ as the *Manager* smack colourfully of the ring.

EUGENE O'NEILL had scarcely found himself when he wrote the three interlocking plays which go to make *S.S. Glencairn*, a grimly realistic picture of the forecabin of a munitions ship during the last war. It is strong, raw stuff, not so much a story as a documentary of life under pressure from fear, and it is just neither to the mentality of British seamen nor to their behaviour. The acting is not up to the usual standard at the Mercury, but the producer, Mr. ROBERT HENDERSON, has deployed his limited forces skilfully; the scene in which a sensitive young sailor is obliged to listen while his love-letters are read aloud is good comment on herd-cruelty, and the fight followed by the

orgy in port is well staged. The death of the injured seaman might have been more moving if he had finished up with his face averted, for dead men don't blink. Top scorer is Mr. PHILIP DALE, whose temperamental Irishman stands out as the natural leader of the mob.

This is by no means a vintage O'NEILL, nor is it a play for the queasy, but it does send us away marvelling how men in two wars could have spent years waiting with stretched nerves for the torpedo which would touch off such uncomfortable cargo. ERIC.



[S.S. Glencairn]

"A HOME ON THE ROLLING DEEP."

between crude melodrama and obscure symbolism is not so interesting. Mr. TYRONE GUTHRIE catches the atmosphere of a circus until we can almost smell the lions. He gives the exotic inmates of the big top a surging vitality, and against their raucous background the simplicity of the central figure, reflecting I take it cosmic pathos, shows up sharply. This is a philosophic nobleman let down by life and wife who sinks his misery in the humiliations of a knock-about clown. The part is played with nice judgment by Mr. ROBERT HELPMANN. He contrives to extract a

## At the Ballet

### BALLETS DES CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES (WINTER GARDEN)

"... a new ballet in which Taglioni convinces the most fastidious critic that dancing is an art worthy to rank with poetry and painting—that motions can convey to the mind not only the most beautiful and picturesque forms, but also the most enchanting fancies. No description of a sylph ever imagined by poet or delineated by painter could come up to the embodied realization presented by this wonderful artist..."

Thus *The Times* one hundred and fifteen years ago hailed *La Sylphide* and Marie Taglioni—the Romantic Ballet and the Romantic Ballerina. Looking back, we can see how *La Sylphide* epitomizes the romantic era and how this story of the love of a human being for a forest sprite symbolizes the search for the spiritual, the love of mystery, the longing for the unattainable, that filled the minds of poets, painters and musicians.

The revival of *La Sylphide* by the Ballets des Champs-Élysées is an event of great interest, though none of the original choreography remains and ROLAND PETIT's reconstruction, "after Philippe Taglioni," is lacking in imagination. The production is not altogether successful in conveying either "picturesque forms" or "enchanting fancies," and the endeavour not to upset the fire-irons in the process of vanishing up the chimney, or barge into the tartaned wedding-guests as she flits across *James's* distracted vision causes IRENE SKORIK a great deal of unsylphlike concern. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks and an array of tartans that astonish even a Sassenach, an aura of genuine poetry clings to *La Sylphide*. The second act is better than the first. It is set in a forest—the romantics revelled in "verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways"—begins with a witches' dance and ends with the death of the sylph. The witches' dance, led by that splendid character dancer GORDON HAMILTON, is the best piece of choreography in the whole ballet, though it is oddly out of keeping with the rest—as if it had been borrowed from something else. JEAN SCHNEITZHOEFFER's music is charming, and the décor of the first act has been copied from the original. This revival clearly shows that *La Sylphide* has more than a mere antiquarian interest.

In *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* ROLAND PETIT as choreographer is

more at home. This ballet is by JEAN COCTEAU and has a macabre subject that is treated with the lightness of touch and the ironic detachment that are among the most fascinating qualities of the French genius. Instead of wallowing in emotion and expecting his audience to wallow with him the Frenchman will lead one gracefully by the hand just so far and no farther—then step aside and leave the spectator to draw his own conclusions. *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* is an excellent example of this elusive Gallic wit, and here the faintly cynical crowning touch is provided by the décor. BACH's huge Gothic organ Passacaglia is the starting point for the ballet, which depicts a young man repeatedly and cruelly

spurned by Death in the shape of the girl of his dreams. At last in despair he hangs himself. The walls of his attic dissolve round him and the girl reappears in her true form as Death to lead him gently by the hand—not *à la Hollywood* towards a sunset in glorious Technicolor or into a spotlight sunrise shining off-stage (as in *The Vagabonds* of Sadler's Wells), but across *les toits de Paris* illumined by the electric lights on the Eiffel Tower blazoning forth the name of Monsieur Citroën. The ballet is brilliantly danced by NATHALIE PHILIPPART and JEAN BABILEE.

*Les Forains* is also in the repertoire. It seems to have lost something in tautness since last year, but is a masterpiece of its kind. D. C. B.



"I find it best to go direct to Covent Garden."



"What CAN one retort when they say 'Pay you on Friday'?"

### Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### The Soviet System from the Inside

IN April 1944, while on a mission to the United States, Mr. VICTOR KRAVCHENKO, an important Soviet official, put into execution a resolve he had been maturing for some years, severing all connection with his country and its government in order to be at liberty to explain to the world the true nature of the Soviet system. His explanation, entitled *I Chose Freedom* (ROBERT HALE, 15/-), is in the form of an autobiography. Born in 1905 of parents in active sympathy with the revolutionary spirit of the times, the author was predisposed to expect great things from the Soviet system. In his middle twenties he joined the Party, and being energetic, capable and ambitious was in due course given important work in the collectivization of the Ukraine peasantry. The immeasurable suffering entailed by this experiment gave him his first insight into the temper of a police-state. As he became more fully acquainted with the system, he found himself increasingly entangled in it, partly by the atmosphere of fear in which everyone was enveloped, partly by desire for the privileges enjoyed by the higher ranks of the hierarchy. There is nothing in his absorbingly interesting story which is inconsistent with what, by this time, most people are prepared to expect from a totalitarian state, whatever its label. Much more important than his exposure of the system is the author's constant reminder that those who have most reason to deplore its continuance are the Russians themselves, a fact that other nations tend to overlook.

H. K.

#### Geneva to Kabul

When Miss ELLA K. MAILLART set out from Switzerland to Afghanistan with a small Ford, five cameras and a neurotic friend, she had two main objectives. One was to put new life into the friend, the other to perform an equivalent service for Europe by discovering a people unenslaved by artificial needs; unforced, therefore, to increase production; and free to attempt to live peaceably. The pair set forth in June 1939 and reached Kabul just as war broke out. Much generous sympathy is lavished on the friend, who appears to symbolize—perhaps designedly?—European decadence confronted by Asiatic vigour. Yet, ironically enough, when the seeing eye and the five dangerously smuggled cameras have recorded the visible beauty (which itself records the spiritual beauty) of the long journey, the travellers face, from a bridge built possibly by Genghis Khan, all the worst horrors they have left behind. Here is Pol-i-Khumri: with mass-production and a ragged, malarious proletariat in a land whose very gipsies ride gay in homespun and embroidery. It would seem that what we really need is a closer *rapprochement* of souls and a wider dispersal of bodies. Those, at any rate, who see "natives" as so many uncorralled conscripts and taxpayers may reach the end of *The Cruel Way* (HEINEMANN, 18/-) with very different notions.

H. P. E.

#### Dr. Campbell's Diary

*Dr. Campbell's Diary of a Visit to England in 1775* (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 8/6), carried by his nephew to New South Wales, discovered there in 1854, and published with some omissions, has now been reprinted in an unexpurgated form from the original manuscript by Mr. JAMES L. CLIFFORD. Macaulay read this diary, which was sent to him from New South Wales, and accepted it as genuine; but Dr. Jowett was displeased by some of the language Campbell put into Dr. Johnson's mouth, and held the diary to be a forgery, and Birkbeck Hill accepted its authenticity with reluctance. In its present form it would have pained Victorian taste still more, for Johnson is represented on more than one occasion talking with a freedom which is rather startling in the author of *The Rambler*, though there are parallel instances in the original diary of Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, first published in 1936. It was principally to see Johnson that Thomas Campbell, an Irish clergyman and antiquary, came over to England. Socially very agreeable, Dr. Campbell, like many socially agreeable persons, was candid enough on paper, and gives vivid and by no means flattering sketches of Johnson, Boswell, Barette and the other notable people he met. The diary is well worth reading, apart from its Johnson references. Campbell records his impressions of Paris and Brighton, Dublin and Oxford, as well as of London. At Oxford, he narrates, the streets re-echoed with bacchanalian cries and "this happily abated my enthusiasm conceived for an Oxford education."

H. K.

#### Exploring Realms of Gold

Keats's brother George emigrated to America, and Fanny Brawne's relations lived there also. Perhaps, then, it is a kind of family feeling that has led American scholars to appreciate Keats so generously. A new study, and a very distinguished one, is *Keats and the Daemon King* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, \$4.00), by Mr. WERNER W. BEYER of Columbia, which traces the influence on Keats of Wieland's *Oberon*. Keats, it has been shown, read



*Oberon* as early as 1815 in a rather bad translation; it is a rosy, moonlit, grotto-and-rock-bestrewn, thunder-and-lightning, sweetly odorous, Teutonically philosophical, sex-laden, sentimental and faintly frowsy Romance of chivalry; just the kind of thing Keats would plunge into when he was spellbound by Leigh Hunt and still admired Thomas Moore. Mr. BEYER's book, "the result of years of literary detective work," traces hundreds of direct borrowings and hints from *Oberon*. A great deal of this, of course, can only be guesswork. Bernard Shaw once wrote that "Keats was the sort of youth who calls a window a casement"—and it is hard indeed to identify a hermit here or an ivy-mantled ruin there in the Romantic landscape and say which one it is that caught his fancy. Mr. M. R. Ridley tried it in *Keats's Craftsmanship* and Mr. BEYER follows the same methods. He is particularly valuable when he deals with the early romances, *Endymion* and the *Eve of St. Agnes*; with the "Odes" he is not quite so happy, but his book is a monument of the best kind of patient American scholarship.

P. M. F.

### A Man of Property

Cobbett, who was all for the labourer's family rising—but gradually and by its own exertions—would heartily approve of *Peasant's Heritage* (JENKINS, 12/6). Here Mr. RALPH WHITLOCK—"Edwin Mould" of *The Field*—relates, in his hero's own words, the career of his father. "Teddy Mould," as readers of *Round Roundbarrow Farm* will remember, was reared by his widowed mother on outdoor relief. Her ownership of a tiny cottage saved the family from the workhouse itself, thereby establishing in her son's mind a sound connection between property and independence. Security, on the other hand, was there to be flouted; and the lad's many shifts and changes were usually inspired by a desire to escape the comparatively snug bondage of a shepherd's life for an allotment—enlarged into a small-holding—eked out by the improvisation of odd jobs. His Wessex background and Wessex neighbours have the right Hardy tang; and their two illicit industries, poaching and candle-making, provide a useful comment on laws made to be broken. The story is exhilarating from first to last; and one is not surprised to find Uncle James from Alberta congratulating Ted and his Betty on their colonization of England, while warning them, in 1912, that "future wars and eventual industrialization" would induce him personally to give Europe a wide berth.

H. P. E.

### Progressive Stages

During the twenty years between the wars four dramatists of real merit were found by West End managements, and of these J. B. Priestley had to begin by backing his own plays. It was the non-commercial stage, from the London clubs to the remotest repertories, which saved us from sterility in a period when on the Continent new dramatists and fresh methods of production were being tried out with profit by commercial managements; and to the gallant band who led the revolt in this country, Mr. NORMAN MARSHALL, well-known for his work at the Gate and the Festival at Cambridge, devotes *The Other Theatre* (LEHMANN, 15/-). It is a useful record and full of constructive suggestion. Mr. MARSHALL cannot help being gloomy about the future. Financially he thinks the London theatre less healthy even than in 1919. Rents have rocketed and monopoly is growing; at the moment when he wrote, eight of sixteen straight plays in the West End were controlled

by one management. He is afraid, and with reason, that by the time more theatres are built the new audience encouraged by C.E.M.A. and E.N.S.A. will have drifted back to the cinema. Hope lies ultimately in civic theatres in the provinces, but in the meantime the repertories must carry the burden; and here Mr. MARSHALL rightly deplores the low standards inevitable until repertories gain more time for rehearsal by forming reciprocal alliances, such as that between Amersham and Guildford. This stimulating book contains over forty excellent photographs of notable productions.

E. O. D. K.

### Dawn and Dusk

Whether you approve the title of Mr. WALTER DE LA MARE's *Collected Stories for Children* (FABER, 10/6) must depend on what you mean by children, but if you chance to mean those who can remember at dusk or noon-tide all the miraculous springing of the dawn and have, as FRANCIS THOMPSON said, "spirits yet streaming from the waters of Baptism," and who "believe in love, believe in loveliness and believe in belief," then the title will be as perfect to you as the stories themselves. There are seventeen of them and each is the woven pattern of a hope or a love or a memory. Mr. DE LA MARE uses his favourite words (*dark* and *dew*, *soft* and *rose*, *faint*, *still*, *tinkle*, *secret*, *frail* and *shrill*) as though they were water-colours: their use and re-use make so many little pictures that we hardly need Miss IRENE HAWKIN's illustrations, fitting and lovely though these are. Whether he is writing of scarecrows or piccaninnies, cats, fish, very old ladies, an admiral with a magic jacket or a godmother who could offer three centuries of life he is enchanted and enchanting. There is wisdom as well as magic—or perhaps one should say a magical wisdom—"Love is like coal. You can burn it and warm and comfort yourself with its light and heat. Or you can keep it in a cellar."

B. E. B.



"Take down an explosive letter, Miss Trimble."



"Sharp? I'll say! One miss and yer 'and's in 'arf!"

## The Fathers' Race

MISS MILLINER'S amplified voice has just commanded through the microphone "Fathers' Race now, please," and my daughter Goove, aided by the lanky friend Panza, is already violently helping me to take my coat and waistcoat off and pushing me at the same time towards the starting-line. I have the familiar sinking feeling common to the preliminaries of all public competitions, much heightened by the knowledge that this one has been long and carefully devised so as to make the fathers look thoroughly foolish and to cause them physical pain if at all possible, the latter being thought particularly wizard. Last year I broke a tooth.

I am now lined up with some thirty other sheepish ones and survey the field. The greybeard whom I have been appraising victoriously all the afternoon is *not* amongst us: it appears—afterwards—that he is not a father but a grandfather. On the other hand three towering and slim youths, the

parents, if they are not mere impostors, of certainly nothing more than recent entrants to the kindergarten, are champing at my side with fire coming from their nostrils. One of these cads is actually wearing *shorts* and none of them has braces, like me. There is, however, a little comfort farther down the line, where leaning over I remark some hopefully protuberant stomachs, and here and there the reassuring glint of spectacles. But on the whole I see that being the father of a Senior loads the dice against me and that one has to pay for having a daughter on the committee.

Miss Milliner is now telling us exactly what we are expected to do, making it sound at once easy and quite inevitable—just the way she gets small girls to learn Latin, I suppose. First, she coos, we all pass under the tennis-net stretched flat on the ground with two weighty mistresses sitting on the ends; *then* we dash off and climb one of four spring-boards sloping almost

vertically up to the top of vaulting-horses; *then* we jump down and pick up a bun with a tennis-racket and *no* hands allowed please: *then* we eat the bun; and *then* we dash off to a pile of skipping-ropes and skip to the finishing-line. That's absolutely all. Oh, and will we take our shoes off, so as not to damage the spring-boards?

This is just plain death in the afternoon, making last year's shambles seem like a Dance of the Flowers. I decide that both Goove and Panza who assisted and no doubt led the committee to elaborate this mass parricide will pay richly for it if I survive. I then mechanically take off my shoes, look at a large hole in my sock, realize that I am beyond caring and resolve to go down fighting. I even get a small satisfaction from seeing that the man with shorts had shoes with spikes in them, the cheat—anyhow, jolly useful nails, and at least that caper has been checkmated. I also, being not without cunning myself, shift to the centre of

the line, where the tennis-net, I calculate, will bulge more readily; and I take care to select a thoroughly protuberant neighbour, who will assist with the bulging. . . .

The whistle has gone, the net has bulged, I am nearly through, there is something holding me back, it is my braces, there they go and here come the spring-boards. The bulgy neighbour has got there first, but gratitude is not in me, and I just push him straight off and let him be trampled by the pursuing mob. Now I have a racket; I run to the buns, I select a bun, it won't get on the racket, I put it on with the foot with the hole in the toe, Miss Milliner said nothing about feet, and the bun is now partly in my mouth. Only one other man is as yet bun-faced, but others are arriving in scores and I must eat very fast. I cannot eat fast, the bun won't eat, the other man has a bigger mouth or something. Heavens, he's finished already, and someone else, and some more, mine's gone now and here's the skipping-rope. The skipping-rope is made for a tiny child, less than a junior—a hare or even a rabbit, I should say—I bend double and hop along like a malevolent old dwarf, I am here, it is over, I am about seventh, I think. But it is over.

I am just thinking that I will pull Panza's pig-tail hard for this and torture Goove by making her wash behind her ears, when they appear together with large vanilla-iced olive-branches. "You weren't *nearly* as bad as Mummy thought you'd be," says Goove, and "You gave that old boy a wizard shove off the spring-board," says Panza, "was it fun?" "Wizard," I say. "Can you find me a safety-pin for my braces?" But this is ignored because the loud-speaker crackles, Miss Milliner is announcing the inter-Section Relay Race, and my two Seniors are off to marshal, exhort and if necessary impel respectively the Thorns and the Brambles. I find my shoes amongst a press of Briars and rescue my coat from underneath a lesser Prickle. Then with the other fathers I relapse into use as a back-ground.

#### No Peace Dove

"President Truman has denounced the coo in Hungary."—Schoolboy's dictation.

"Wanted, to buy, Dog Basket.—34 North Bridlington or Filey. Cash waiting; or would consider exchange for good medium modern House, Harrogate. Cash adjustment."

Advt. in Yorks. paper.

And a very delicate one, if you ask us.

## The Cow and the Nightingale

**F**AIR was the hour, you'll freely own,  
When man evolved the process known

As Daylight Saving,  
Though at the first go off to some  
It would have doubtless seemed a rum  
Way of behaving.

But soon that innovation grew  
Familiar, which with aught that's new  
Is half the battle,  
And willing dog and docile horse  
Were gathered into it perforce,  
But not the cattle.

Unmoved by man's convenience these  
At the old time preferred to ease  
Their teeming udders,  
Confronting all attempts to hale  
Them earlier to the milking-pail  
With bovine shudders.

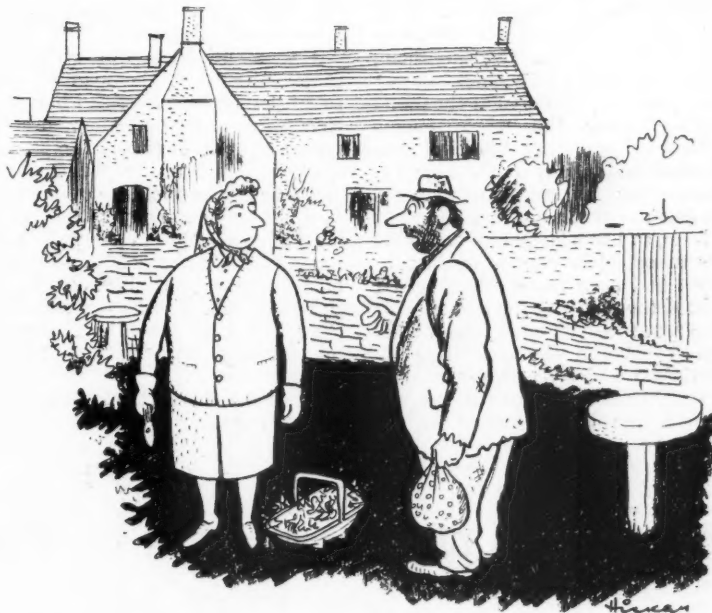
Turn we from cows. And, Muse, inspire  
For once, O Lyric Muse, my lyre  
To sing, and rightly,  
The bird who in the deepening  
gloom  
Before the Daylight Saving boom  
Rejoiced us nightly.

Ay he would pour his music out  
From dusk till half-past-ten, about,  
Or e'en eleven,  
And men at that ecstatic gush  
Stood with raised palm and murmured  
Hush,  
Isn't that heaven.

But with the clock shoved on ahead  
We early seek our lily bed,  
While he keeps at it  
Till that loud song, the poets' dream,  
Becomes a sleep-destroying scream,  
Confound and drat it.

For many a year I've wondered  
how  
The passive unromantic cow  
With night's high singer  
Could into one fine song be worked,  
A job that every bard has shirked,  
And, mark, a stinger.

And here they are. The earthy  
beeve,  
Th' embodied song that starts at  
eve  
(Except when rainy)  
Wedded, and at the first attempt,  
In metric union. Who'd have dreamt  
I was so brainy. DUM-DUM.



"Well, for that matter, what are YOU doing pottering about the garden when there are three hundred thousand women wanted in industry?"



## My Sythe

**A** SYTHE is an odd-looking contraption. The man who sold me mine said that as I was also rather a remarkable shape he would get his blacksmith to take a reef in the blade. He said he was doing this because he imagined what I wanted wasn't a bulldozer but something to cut grass with, and I replied not only grass but nettles and St. Ermyswort and all the richly assorted non-edibles that clutter the estate of one of moderate means. He asked if I would like an English or an American handle. I knew which Mr. Dalton would have me buy, but when I saw the two together I realized immediately that here again the ingenuity of a young and virile race had got ahead of us. The English handle was still a primeval broomstick while its cousin had evolved into a wooden serpent so contrived as to writhe comfortably around the average bulges of the average human being.

A lot of people had told me how to sythe, but a lot of people will tell you how to play golf, and a stranger in the Underground once got out in the belief that he had explained the game of chess to me between Charing Cross and Paddington. I must say I should have preferred to make my opening moves in some desert spot, but my intentions had got about and when I reached the jousting-place I found most of my dependants deployed acidly in a semi-circle. Ignoring them, I knelt down and with a small hammer struck a few expert blows at the metal wedges holding the whole engine together. I took my beautiful new whetstone and made sure the edge was sufficient for my purpose. It was sufficient to cut three of my fingers to the bone, so I was fairly confident that grass stood little chance against it. After I had been roughly bandaged I adjusted the straps of the cricket-pads which prudence demanded, and, taking a mean between the conflicting instructions I had been given, I swung gently. What surprised me was not so much the leaden weight of the

sythe as the gruelling angle at which one had to lean before it would take wing at all. There was quite a pleasant swishing sound and I think I may have bruised a few thistles on the way back, but it was clear that far from slicing I was topping. Now the left foot is very important in sything, partly because no insurance company will touch it and partly because it is what leader-writers call the fulcrum. I shifted it a trifle farther to the east and tried again. This time I drove the point of the blade into one of the bricks which come up from Australia to the surface of my estate after rain—usually in the company of gaily-coloured fragments of aboriginal dinner-plates—and the point snapped off with a merry twang and disappeared towards mid-on. No herbal casualties resulted, but all the metal wedges dropped out in a row and my sythe fell apart into a number of interesting components. . . . For my third stroke I decided to keep my head down at all costs while trying for a greater degree of follow-through, and when I had got to my feet again and we had dug up the blade I found it was no longer a flashing scimitar, a thing of pride, but had become a muddy strip of corrugated iron. The remarks of the mob would have been beside the point but for the misadventure I have already described.

I therefore took the sythe back pretty angrily to the man who had sold it to me, and informed him stiffly that while everyone knew post-war metals to contain cheese I expected a sythe to stand up to ordinary wear and tear and not fold up on me like a fan. When he saw my sythe the man laughed coarsely in a way which rendered stillborn any friendship which might have ripened between us, and suggested that a corkscrew sometimes came in handy. Then he made out a bill starting "FOR REPAIRS TO ONE SCYTHE."

"I see you subscrythe to the common error," I said.

"Eh?" he snorted, his pencil poised in mid-air between four shillings and sixpence.

"Of spelling it with a C."

"You know a lot about sythes," sneered the man, whose face would have sent one hurrying to the next tank in an aquarium.

"I know that the C is an inexcusable intruder which has only crept in through an erroneous, a highly culpable, association with the Latin *scindere*, to cut," I said, and moved haughtily away to study the impact of modern principles on mouse-traps. I seldom enter into etymological disputes with ironmongers, in fact I don't enter into etymological disputes with anyone if I can help it. As soon as the blacksmith had applied first-aid I took my sythe away, knocking over a few table-lamps as I went, as Boadicea might have done.

I saw that before I could hope to get round the home meadow in par figures style must be built up bit by bit. Remembering how Suzanne Lenglen had mastered tennis through banging away year after year into the numbered squares of a roulette-court I picked out some individual nettles with red paint, and marked the perfect swing in whitewash and two large Xs for my feet. After that I placed a glass of water on my sythe to encourage even movement, and set cautiously to work. The blade was edging nicely towards the lordliest of the nettles when I heard a dull, authoritative thud behind me. It was the main cable that runs up the middle of the back and over the little master-pulley at the top of the spine. . . .

Lumbago is lumbago, but with a telephone beside the bed it is just possible to sell a sythe. I sold it to a man I knew who has a permanent stoop from playing croquet for England. I told him I believed it to be a perfectly pointless implement and he assured me I had got it all wrong.

ERIC.

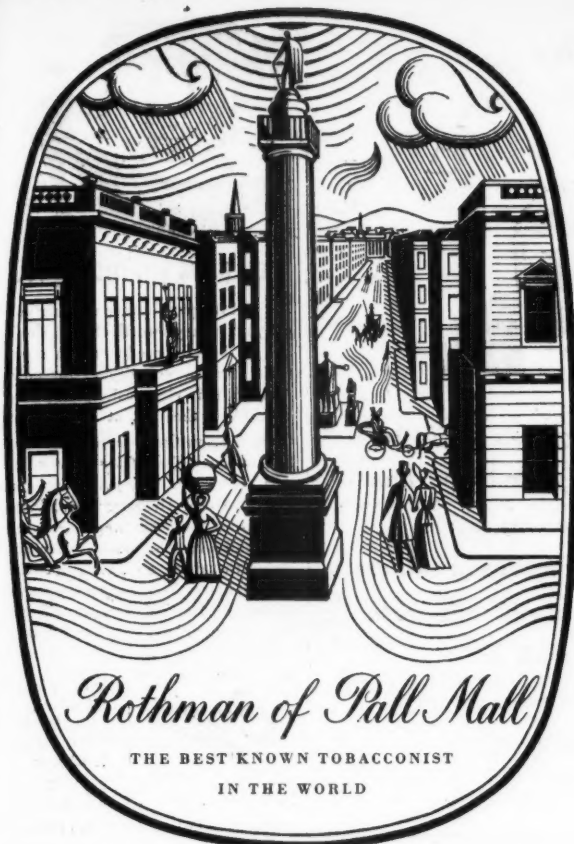
Here ends Mr. Punch's Two



Hundred and Twelfth Volume

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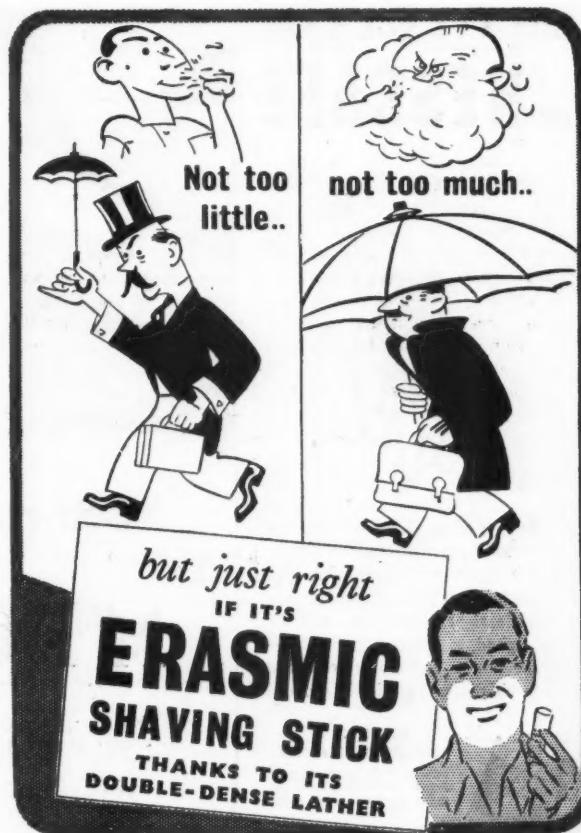
*It's no conjuring  
trick, madam,*

says OLD HETHERS

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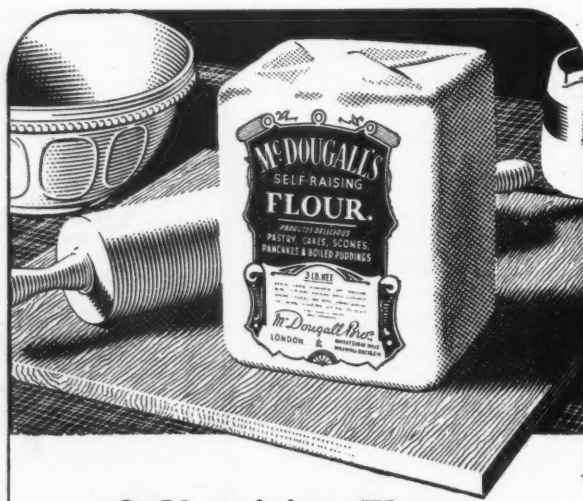
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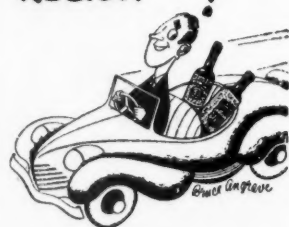
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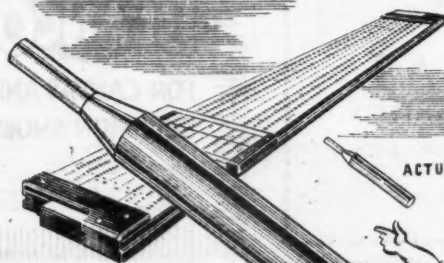
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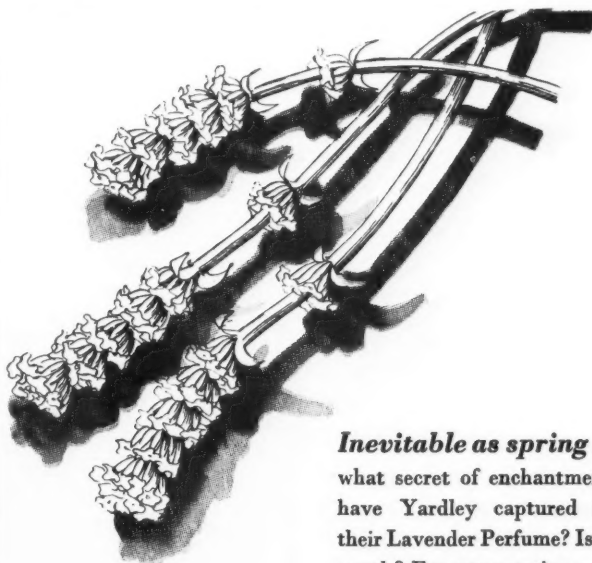
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A Barneys Echo

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25th Nov. '46

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